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ABSTRACT

This is a study of the research communities in history and political science at Kent State University (Ohio). The purpose is to provide a profile of historians and political scientists and to discover the kinds of information they use for research. A survey/questionnaire was circulated to the history and political science departments. Information was solicited from faculty and graduate students in both departments. The findings show many areas of similar resource use. Despite some similarities, differences in access and method remain. Historians remain more traditional, using mostly older print sources, while the political science scholars use more current up to date resources like CD-ROM and online databases. Overall, many of the findings strongly support what has been found in previous studies. Tables illustrate demographic data, library use, typical information sources, convenient and inconvenient information formats, and percentages borrowed research materials. Survey instruments are appended. (Contains 21 references.) (Author/TMK)

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CONVERGENCE OR DIVERGENCE? A STUDY OF THE INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR OF HISTORIANS AND POLITICAL SCIENTISTS

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library and Information
Science in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Library Science

by

Joseph E. Straw

August, 1993

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Master's Research Paper by

Joseph E. Straw

B.G.S., Kent State University, 1982

M.L.S., Kent State University, 1993

Approved by

Advisor_____ Date _____

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This is a study of the research communities in history and political science at Kent State University. A survey/questionnaire was circulated to the history and political science departments. Information was solicited from both faculty and graduate students in both departments. The findings show many areas of similar resource use. Despite some similarities, differences in access and method remain. Historians remain more traditional, using mostly older print sources, while the political science scholars use more current up to date resources like CD-ROM and online databases. Overall many of the findings strongly support what has been found in previous studies.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES..... v

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION..... 1

Purpose of the Study..... 2

Definitions of Terms..... 2

Limitations of the Study..... 3

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE..... 4

III. METHODOLOGY..... 30

IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA..... 31

Demographic Characteristics..... 31

Purpose of Research..... 33

Areas of Research..... 34

Languages..... 36

Library Use..... 36

Sources Typically Used..... 37

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS..... 59

APPENDIX

A. HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE AND COVER LETTER..... 65

B. POLITICAL SCIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE AND COVER LETTER..... 70

ENDNOTES..... 75

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 78

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1.	Distribution of Respondents by Demographic Characteristics	32
2.	Distribution of Responses as to Where Research is Likely to Appear	34
3.	Distribution of Respondents by Library Use per Week	37
4.	Information Sources Typically Used in Research by Historians and Political Scientists	38
5.	Five Sources Most Frequently Used in Research by Historians and Political Scientists	39
6.	Five Sources Typically Used in Research by Historians	41
7.	Five Sources Most Frequently Used in Research by Historians	40
8.	Information Sources Typically Used in Research by Political Scientists	42
9.	Five Sources Most Frequently Used in Research by Political Scientists	43
10.	Sources Typically Used to Identify Useful Information by Historians and Political Scientists	44
11.	Five Sources Most Frequently Used to Identify Information by Historians and Political Scientists	45
12.	Sources Typically Used to Identify Useful Information by Historians	46
13.	Five Sources Most Frequently Used to Identify Useful Information by Historians	47

LIST OF TABLES (Con't.)

Table		Page
14.	Sources Most Typically Used to Identify Useful Information by Political Scientists.....	48
15.	Five Sources Most Frequently Used to Identify Useful Information by Political Scientists.....	49
16.	Formats Found the Most Convenient by Historians..	50
17.	Formats Found the Least Convenient by Historians.	51
18.	Formats Found the Most Convenient by Political Scientists.....	52
19.	Formats Found the Least Convenient by Political Scientists.....	53
20.	Percentage of Current Research Materials Borrowed from other Libraries.....	55
21.	Sources Used by Historians to Keep Up.....	57
22.	Sources Used by Political Scientists to Keep Up..	58

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Information needs are an important area of research for librarians and information professionals. The data obtained from this research has driven many important decisions about library collections and services. Much of this research has also helped librarians understand the patterns of communication that exist in the constituencies in which they serve.

An interesting area of information need is the social sciences. History and political science are two large sub-fields in the social sciences. The need for library materials among these two groups has been little examined. Both historians and political scientists share a common interest in politics and political phenomena. To what extent this commonality of interest has conditioned the literature and resource use of political scientists and historians needs to be examined empirically.

A comparative look at a community of scholars in political science and history, could provide interesting insight into the similar or distinct approaches of these scholars towards library and resource use. The state of Ohio has several large communities of political scientists

and historians that work in an academic context. One of these is at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. As fairly large departments, a study of these two communities may reflect the patterns of library use within the two disciplines as a whole.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to provide a profile of historians and political scientists at Kent State University, and to discover the kinds of information they use for research. A comparison was made to find out the differences in the information seeking behavior of these two communities. It is hoped that a greater appreciation of the research requirements of history and political science will be obtained. The results of this study were also examined in light of other studies and, perhaps provide for librarians additional data regarding services and bibliographic resources to meet the needs of these scholars.

Definitions of Terms

For the purposes of this study, historians will mean those who are engaged in the teaching or study of history, either to advance historical knowledge, or to meet graduate level academic requirements (e.g. term papers, theses, dissertations, etc.). Like historians, political scientists will mean those engaged in the teaching or study of

politics, either to advance the understanding of political phenomena, or to meet graduate degree or class requirements. The framework of these meanings is broad enough to take in faculty members and graduate students on both the masters and doctoral levels.

Limitations of the Study

This study is not free from limitations. Information gathered in any fashion often depends on an individual's memory, which may have lapsed over time. All research may be limited, by greater or lesser degrees, to what the researcher and scholar already know; both must work with what they have seen, not with what ought to have been seen. Perhaps most importantly, this study is limited by its small sample. A study was made on only two communities that work within the context of a single university, thus the results of this study cannot be generalized to all historians and all political scientists.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

To date, few empirical studies have treated the problem of information needs for historians and political scientists. Perhaps the landmark research, which helped spawn interest about more specific disciplines, was the study of social scientists information needs done at Bath University in England between 1968-71. This study pointed out that social scientists often locate references by looking at things cited in monographs and journals. They have a tendency to under use or disregard the services of librarians and information professionals. It is also noted that social scientists rely too much on books and journal articles for their formal information. The Bath study goes on to talk about an extensive network of informal communication that carries and disseminates important research information. This informal network is often the medium by which scholars start their research or keep up to date about developments in their field. Many of the findings of the Bath study have provided a useful basis for other research into the uses of library information by scholars.[1]

Some research has been conducted that deals with the

information needs of historians and political scientists directly. The most common types of methods used in these studies are the citation analysis and user study. Each of these methods has contributed something to our understanding and deserves some type of recapitulation.

For historians, there are two important citation studies. The first was conducted by Arthur Monroe McAnally in 1951 on the use of research materials by scholars in American history.[2] The other was conducted in 1972 by Clyve Jones, Michael Chapman, and Pamela Carr Woods on citations made by scholars in English history.[3] Both studies looked at citation patterns in selected monographs and journals. They found that books are the source most heavily consulted by historians. Books are followed by articles in journals, many of which are found in a few core publications. Also very little use was made of materials in languages other than English. Both studies point to the importance of older primary sources for the historian. For historians in general, this is the most important class of materials. They are the historian's most visible connection with the past that they study. Most historians find that primary source material has a value that goes beyond the interpretations and judgments of secondary material. The study of English historians points out that: "the pattern of age distribution of references suggests that secondary

historical works become rapidly obsolete but that primary sources for the historian retain their value over time."[4]

In political science there have been a number of citation studies that provide some interesting insight into how political science scholars operate, and what kinds of material that they find important. One of the earliest was conducted by June Stewart in 1970. This study examined citations from a book of readings on comparative politics.[5] Analysis of these citations showed that the American Political Science Review was the most frequently cited journal. Stewart then takes four years of citations from this journal for further sources of citations. Four years of two major British journals, Political Studies and Political Quarterly were scanned for their citations. Including those obtained from the monograph, 3610 citations were examined.[6]

Analysis of the citations showed that monograph literature is of first importance in political science. Nearly 66% of the citations were made up of monographs. These monographs are drawn from three sources. There is a part that is drawn directly from the discipline that consists of"classics in the field" or what might be regarded as the nucleus of the literature. A second part is made up of material drawn from the humanities, which is of a relatively earlier date. The final part is taken from more

recent social science literature consisting of law, economics, psychology, and sociology.[7]

Periodicals provide less than 30% of the citations for this study. The periodical citations are largely made up of American sources. Of these sources there is a core group of journals led by the American Political Science Review. Only 3% of the periodicals cited were for materials in foreign languages. Stewart goes on to say that political science has undergone its greatest growth in the period since 1945, and is still in the process of establishing itself. In the years to come, Stewart predicts, political scientists will use more periodical sources reflecting a large group of journals.[8]

An interesting follow-up to the 1970 June Stewart study was conducted in 1976 by Elliot Palais. This study traces the 179 journals cited in the Stewart study, and tries to see how 13 social science and humanities indexing and abstracting services cover the body of literature. Palais found that none of the services covered all of the journals, and only one (Bulletin Analytique de Documentation Politique) had as many as 124. It was found that of the 25 journals most frequently cited (in the Stewart study) two services covered all 25, and two others covered 23. Five other services covered from 16-22 of the most cited journals. Palais notes that for the larger body of

literature bibliographic coverage is lacking, while coverage for the core material is stronger. The study points out that coverage of the core literature is generally complete but that coverage "tends to fall away from completeness in fringe areas."[9] As the researcher in political science expands to remoter areas, the fringe areas become much less clearly defined and research decisions tend to become more subjective. This subject dispersion is seen as evidence for the borrowing of literature from other disciplines by political scientists. Overall subject dispersion is demonstrated to be an important obstacle to full bibliographic control in political science.

A more recent citation study provided some interesting insight into the research process of political science. The 1988 study of Fahad M. Al Dosary explored the relationship of research approach and the citation behavior of political scientists.[10] Dosary took 204 articles from the International Political Science Abstracts. The chosen articles had to be a research article dealing with a political topic. The articles also had to have citations to other sources, and not be a review of an article or a book.[11]

Dosary read and classified the chosen articles into traditionalist and behavioralist schools of thought. The traditional approach is well summarized in this statement by

Topsy N. Smalley:

> Traditional political science demonstrates many positivistic tendencies. Institutions, and the processes through which they accomplish their objectives are scrutinized; documentary materials, laws, constitutions, administrative directives, diplomatic papers, the organizational papers of political parties are analyzed.[12]

A rather formal concentration on laws, the state, presidency, and the operation of international institutions characterizes this approach. The traditionalist approach conducts research using non-quantitative methods like philosophical reflection, the reading of documents, personal observations, or details drawn from subjective interpretation.

The second school is the so-called behavioral approach. Robert Dahl outlines the assumptions of this approach by observing that:

> the behavioral approach came to be associated with a belief that additional methods or approaches either existed or could be developed that would help to provide political science with empirical propositions and theories of a systematic sort, tested by more direct and rigorous controlled observations of political events.[13]

Behaviorists sought to do this by the study of individuals, informal institutions, processes and cultural norms. The research direction of this approach is more quanatative with a focus on generating new data, duplication of results, and numeric presentation.

Dosary analyzed the end citations, and found that

differences in research approach was a significant factor in choice of sources. He found that the journal citation rate was higher for behavioralists, and they cited materials of greater median age than the traditionalists. It was also found that the traditionalists used a higher percentage of non-political science sources in their articles. Also the study discovered that both groups used little, if any, non-English language materials in their research. Overall, Dosary found that the research decisions made by political scientists are often related to their analytical disposition.[14]

Another interesting recent citation study was reported by Stephen McGinty in 1989. McGinty investigated monograph publishing patterns in political science by looking at selected journal citations. He took all the citations to monographs appearing in the American Political Science Review and the Journal of Politics for 1974-1975 and 1984-1985. The monographs were arranged as to content reflecting these categories: material in English, foreign language materials, doctoral dissertations, unpublished material, conference proceedings, and papers. All the publishers of the monographs were noted and tallied.[15]

McGinty found that, in both periods studied, the bulk of the monographs were produced by a core group of publishers. He goes on to note that in both periods over 90%

of the cited monographs were for materials in English. The citations for both periods show the scholarly load being carried by a handful of publishers. McGinty divides these publishers into a group of 25 for each period studied. Perhaps most importantly, McGinty shows a significant volatility in nearly all areas of political science publishing. In the years studied, nearly all of the most active publishers changed position. It is noted that the class of literature that grew the most was monographs having the text to conference proceedings and papers. The study notes the increase in what might be called "nontraditional" publishing sources to get at unpublished or grey literature. McGinty sees this as an indication that political scientists may be changing the way in which their ideas are exchanged. He notes a movement away from traditional monographs, and a move toward communication that occurs through less formal channels.[16]

User studies have been another form of collecting data on information needs. For historians there have been a number of attempts to do this through looking at literature, and by examining what historians do when they do history. An early attempt to look at the process of history was reported by Peter A. Uva in 1977. This research study attempted to analyze the research habits of a selected group of historians. Fifty-two academic historians, from the

faculties of Cornell University and the University of Rochester, were surveyed. A critical incident technique was employed by the use of a mailed self-administered questionnaire. It was hoped that stages of research would emerge, in which different information sources could be isolated for each stage.[17]

Uva identified five stages of historical research. They were described as problem selection, detailed planning, data collection, analysis and interpretation, and writing-rewriting. In the stage of problem selection, the historian reviews his experience and prior interests and decides to pursue a topic. At this level, the historian might look over books on the topic or perhaps review his own writings. When a topic is developed, a planning process gets underway. At this level, the researcher will begin to think about the direction in which he wishes to take his topic. It is here that the historian may state some type of initial hypothesis for his research. While planning, the historian begins his search for primary source material by looking at guides and consulting his colleagues.

When the planning of a project has taken its course, the collection of data can begin in earnest. Full examination of primary source material characterizes this stage. Books, journals, and secondary writings are often used to supplement the basic reliance on the primary source.

As the data is collected, a framework for analysis and interpretation starts to emerge. While analyzing his material, the historian can see his assumptions about the topic measured against the witness of the primary source. By doing this, an outline of the topic can be formulated and refined for final written presentation. The final stage of writing-rewriting takes in all the efforts of the earlier stages to produce the final product.

In all of these stages there are different information needs. Uva points out that the thread binding together the various stages of historical inquiry is the need for primary sources. Primary sources are, to a large extent, what history is all about. The availability of primary information largely determines the decisions that the historian makes at every stage of research.[18]

A study that looked at the historian's use of periodicals and bibliographic tools was done by Margaret F. Stieg in 1981. Stieg surveyed 767 historians listed in the Directory of American Scholars about aspects of their information seeking behavior. Many of her findings were related to the earlier citation studies. Books were found to be most important, closely followed by periodicals, and manuscript sources. Stieg reports that the majority of historians do not keep up with research published in foreign languages. The study also points to the lack of use of

newer forms of media such as online databases, videos, and films.[19]

Stieg found out some interesting things about the use of periodicals by historians. She found little use of formal indexing and abstracting services. It was found that many historians preferred to find citations at the end of journal articles and books. Stieg seemed a little stunned to find out that a large number of historians used popular guides to the literature such as Reader's Guide and newspaper indexes. Stieg sees the non-use of indexes and abstracts as evidence of an unsystematic approach to research. She points out that:

> Researchers certainly use fewer bibliographical tools than would be helpful to them and do not make the systematic and frequent use of abstracting tools required to ensure good coverage of their topics and at the same time to minimize the possibility of missing important material.[20]

According to Stieg historians are largely geared to older print sources. Much of the reason for this is due to the great age of the resources that historians must use in their research. Historians remain relatively traditional because it is often the only way of getting at needed primary information.[21]

Another important study on the historical process was conducted by Donald Owen Case in 1991. This study is a limited set of interviews with 20 American historians. Case

claims that his study looks at the behavior of historians as they formulate their research. He conducted extensive discussions with his subjects to discover what historians do when they research. Case tries to get at how they choose topics, the motivations for research, the stages of inquiry, and how they report their findings.[22]

This study reported that historical research is question driven. Topics often emerge because of past interests, circumstances, or interpersonal contacts. Historians are led to their sources through an extended dialogue with their topic. When the topic is conceptualized it can be arranged into categories in which phenomena can be transferred into writing. Unlike the stages suggested by Uva, Case points out that every aspect of the historians research can act itself out with every decision. Thus the research behavior of historians is variable, and cannot be understood without reference to the questions that define research.

User studies have also been utilized to collect information on the research needs of political scientists. Many of these studies have focused on uses of specific types of materials. One such study was conducted in France in 1977 by Dominique Saintville. He surveyed French political scientists about their use of journals and periodicals. It was found that they consulted most the bibliographic tools

put out by their association. There was a tendency to consult bibliographic tools in associated disciplines. Saintville reports use of indexing and abstracting services in sociology, psychology, economics, geography, history, and business. He also discovered that information was obtained from the bibliographies at the end of conventional articles, and that they often got research tips from personal contacts.[23]

The respondents complained about many of the features of standard bibliographic tools. Criticisms of these publications include delay in publication, difficulty in obtaining documents, poor selection, inadequate coverage, and difficulty of use. All of these factors are important in determining the success of many periodical access tools. Saintville reports that perceptions about the quality of a given source will often decide if an access tool is used by the researcher.

Another study of periodical use was done by Robert Goehlert in 1978. This study generated data from a document delivery service for faculty members in political science and economics at Indiana University. It was found that both departments rely heavily on a group of core journals in doing their research. The political scientists were found to have a broader pool of basic journals than the economists. Well over 90% of the core journals, in both

disciplines, are American produced publications. Nearly all of the articles requested from the journals were for articles in English.[24]

Goehlert discovered that a high percentage of scholars in both disciplines found their requested articles through the use of other journals and monographs. The identification of articles through the use of indexes and other bibliographic tools was found to be less than expected. Like the earlier Saintville study, it was found that the use of formal bibliographic tools often depends on the negative or positive perceptions about the features of the tool.

In 1980, Robert Goehlert conducted another study on the information demands of political scientists and economists at Indiana University. This study looked at the use of federal documents by the two disciplines. An experimental current awareness service was set-up. The service was made available to faculty members in the departments of political science and economics. Two lists of current documents, received by the Government Publications Department, were distributed by the service. The first list had publications of executive departments, and the second was a list of congressional documents. After distributing several issues of the current awareness list, a questionnaire was sent to the faculty members receiving the lists. The study was

designed to determine faculty use of documents, and to assess the value of the current awareness service.[25]

The study found that both political scientists and economists are heavy users of federal documents. Political scientists were found to be more frequent users of documents in their research. The most cited reason for using documents was for research, followed by teaching, and keeping abreast of current developments. Faculty members reported using government documents more than they use the current awareness service, but only a very small percentage report never using the service. The findings indicate that the service did not promote use of documents for non-users, but it was considered important for regular users of government documents. Goehlert pointed out that the users of documents find the service an aid to research, and increases their knowledge about the availability and extent of federal documents.[26]

The use of federal documents was the subject of another study carried out by Christopher W. Nolan in 1986. The study surveyed 302 undergraduate students out of 659 majoring in political science, history, and economics at Claremont College. Nolan tried to investigate the extent of use of government documents by students, and considers reasons for their use or lack of use.[27]

Results indicated that there is considerable use of the

government documents collection by students. Nolan shows that political science students use documents most frequently. It is also noted that the majority of economics students use government documents. Lowest use of documents was reported by the history students. Political science students use the document collection more, and they use it more intelligently. They were more likely to use available instruction, and to take advantage of tools to identify documents.

According to the survey, the most important factor in students' knowledge of documents is their faculty. Most of the students that indicated using documents had been referred to them by faculty. Nolan uses this as evidence of the importance the faculty attaches to the use of documents. The high use of documents by political science students is seen as evidence of the importance of government documents in the discipline of political science as a whole.[28]

While empirical studies shed interesting light on the information needs of historians and political scientists, many critical and interpretative works also provide important insight. Many of these works talk about the relationship of the scholar to the library. One such discussion was attempted by the historian Jacques Barzun in 1946. In an essay titled: "The Scholar Looks at the Library," Barzun talks about the process of communication

between the historian and the library.

Barzun points out that the scholar is outside the system which makes the library work. The system in which the library operates is never as firmly registered in the mind of the public as it is in the mind of the librarian. Out of this arises all sorts of tensions and misunderstandings, which often set the librarian and scholar against each other. To heal this working relationship, librarians must be aware of the virtues of attention and general knowledge.[29]

Attentiveness is regarded as something obtuse, and not clearly the same for each person. Barzun gives a sense of his meaning by saying:

> To begin with the scholar is in a kind of purposeful daze. When he strikes a snag, he wants a kind of instant response which will clear it up and enable him to go on with what he is thinking about. It is at this point that the librarian comes in, either to make the transition as smooth as a train going over a switch, or just as awkward as a derailment. The librarian ought to have the kind of tact and intuition and quickness, either to wait and find out what is wanted in full, or to give him the feeling that if the book or fact can't be located at once, it can be reached fairly soon.[30]

It is clear that every person in a library has a certain obligation to the user. This obligation is to put one's knowledge completely at the disposal of the user, or if something is not known, to admit the fact in a way that leaves no bad feelings.

General knowledge is the second virtue that librarians

must watch for when dealing with scholars. For Barzun, this aspect involves both an unlearning and a learning. The classification system, stack numbers, and cards should be hidden. Librarians should try to conceal as much as possible their knowledge of the system. Barzun illustrates some of his meaning by this example:

> I confess that as a reader of books I am somewhat annoyed when I hear a librarian half audibly mention the class number of a book I happen to mention. The system should be hidden, and one good way to achieve this is to have it absolutely clear in the minds of everybody, so clear that it can't be forgotten like all the automatic things we do.[31]

It is suggested that charts and aids be designed that put people directly in the collection. A real effort needs to be made to help people go on paths that don't involve interaction with the system.

Librarians must be seekers of knowledge. First and foremost, librarians must be readers of books. Barzun talks about the importance of books by saying: "there are certain kinds of knowledge, in the absence of knowledge, kinds of guesswork, of enlightened apprehending, which come from the handling of books."[32] It would be ideal for the librarian who serves the historian to be a trained historian himself. If such a thing is not possible, than a librarian should be a person of the widest possible education.

Another writer who talks about the relationship of the historian and the library system is Robert J. Rubanowice.

His 1975 essay, "Of Librarians and Historians," talks about the frustrations of the historian's quest for information. Perhaps the greatest frustration is the encounter with the library's classification system. Rubanowice finds the current classification systems outdated and inadequate to meet the limitless permutations and combinations of academic research today. He sees library organization being based on the outdated 19th century notion that there is a natural order in reality which should be reflected in the classification system. The legacy of Dewey, Cutter, Bliss and the Library of Congress has been to cut up knowledge into arbitrary bits which are of little use to the historian. Rubanowice totally rejects the idea that history is a separate category of knowledge. History, particularly intellectual history, can overlap with any other branch of knowledge.

Rubanowice sees the current organization of knowledge as a hindrance to modern historical research. He recommends a restructuring based on new principles. It is hoped that a more usable system could emerge that takes into account the relations and interconnections between the bits and pieces of knowledge. A clear movement must be made away from arbitrary and fragmented thinking in classification. Any improved system must consider the idea that knowledge is not a fixed entity, but is constantly evolving and changing.

Thus, any workable system must be structured to grow and change with the world of knowledge.[33]

Many empirical studies have noted the importance of archives in historical research. An interesting work that explores the relationship between historians and archives was written by Dale C. Meyer in 1985. "New Social History: Implications for Archivists," discusses the impact of the New Social History on archival services.

Mayer points out that the fastest growing area of history is social history. In the past few years, the emphasis in social history has taken on a new approach. The so-called New Social History (NSH) is characterized by the use of quantification, computer assisted statistical analysis, and social science techniques. NSH tries to look at "history from the bottom up." Historians of this variety are not interested in the great accomplishments of the few, but in the grinding realities of every day people. The persistence of ethnic cultural patterns (rather than assimilation) is of great interest to NSH historians. A final product based on the processing of quantifiable data is the desired result. They regard the traditional narrative as too biased and impressionistic.[34]

This approach to social history is contrasted to the more traditional history. Traditional approaches to history emphasize the contributions of leaders, great men, and

elites. There is usually a focus on a great event, issue, or time period. Common themes include political, economic, diplomatic, and military history. The types of archival source materials used would include descriptive accounts such as diaries, correspondence, and official records.[35]

NSH has proven to be an important research trend within the historical community. Mayer contends that this demands a strong response from the archival community. New social historians require new and unique sources of information that have not been completely tapped before. Special efforts need to be made to obtain those less readily available records. Records which document the lives of poor people, working women, immigrants, farmers, and organized labors' rank and file need to be solicited and preserved. New efforts need to be made to obtain such things as census records, ships' passenger lists, insurance company records, case files of social agencies, labor union rolls, and fraternal organization records. While not dramatic reading, these records can tell a lot about a wide range of social problems and how society chose to deal with them.[36]

To gather such records archivists will need to increase their presence in the community at large. Besides having to do this, they will also have to be aware of new ways in which organizations are keeping records. A whole array of media will characterize the records of the future. Boxes of

diaries, manuscripts, and correspondence will no longer be the only concern of archivists. Ultimately this will require the standard manipulation of computer files, and the full entrance of the archival community into the automated age.

There have also been a few recent intuitive works that deal with the relationship of political scientists to the library. In a 1980 essay called "Political Science: The Discipline, The Literature, and The Library," Topsy N. Smalley talks about the evolution of research orientations, and approaches to library research in political science.

Smalley indicates that the institutionalized academic study of political science is a very recent phenomenon. Its formal origins can be traced to 1880, the year in which John W. Burgess founded the School of Political Science at Columbia. The basic grounding of the research heritage of political science was a close association with the discipline of history. Out of this association, the traditional school of political science emerged. Evolving from such things as political, diplomatic, and military history, traditional political science looked at the formal institutions of society.[37]

In many ways, the traditional school's approach to library research is similar to that of the historian. The emphasis is basically narrative and archival. The library

is the basic connection that the traditional scholar has to his subject. Certain parts of the library collection are the engines that drive the research of the traditional scholars. Every stage of their research begins and ends within the confines of the library. The library holds the pieces of a puzzle which the scholar must put back together to get a complete and holistic understanding of the political aspects of an institution.

Influenced by the psychological writings of John B. Watson and B.F. Skinner, the behavioralist movement began to impact political science in a big way. In the 1950s and 1960s the discipline experienced a fundamental change in orientation. Behavioralism brought with it an enhanced notion of the extent of the discipline, and a broadening of the types of methodologies that could be acceptable. Smalley points out that political scientists could now "go out into the field and observe the behavior of individuals in a political context."[38] Behavioralist scholars could gather their own data and use instruments to collect information to be fitted in predetermined categories for response or analysis.

Since the behavioralist scholar goes out into the world to generate his own data, Smalley notes that the library plays a more supporting role. For a scholar creating his own data, the methodology and the questions of the project

lead the researcher to the library. The library acts to check and verify the assumptions of the research. Overall the behavioralist approaches the library to help him understand and operationalize concepts as part of a hypothesis driven empirical research scheme.

Smalley indicates that the key to understanding the information problem of political science is understanding the series of orientations political scientists have taken to its pursuit. By an awareness of these orientations, the library can be flexible in designing its information policy. Librarians can also avoid taking a monolithic view of the discipline that locks the library into collections and services that are based on incorrect assumptions.[39]

In another interesting work Don C. Skemer talks about political science and its relation to archives. In his 1991 essay "Drifting Disciplines, Enduring Records: Political Science and the Use of Archives," explores the possibilities of greater use of archives by political scientists. Skemer sees political science emerging out of an archival based research tradition, borrowed from its close ties to history. In recent years, however, use of archives has diminished under the strong influence of behavioralism.[40]

Skemer sees a strong convergence between history and political science in terms of orientations and influences. Older forms of history and traditional political science

share a grounding in basic historical method. While the approach of behavioralist political science shares with the New Social History a strong empirical disposition, Skemer also notes that his own look at political science literature reveals more archival use in research. This may indicate a change in the long standing behavioralist antipathy for humanistic and historical inquiry.[41]

Skemer sees this as opening up the potential for more archival use by political scientists. Archivists themselves must broaden their horizons from their history based service tradition. By understanding the important convergence of the two disciplines, archivists can make effective outreach efforts to encourage the research use of archives by political scientists.

An examination of the library literature reveals few empirical studies that deal directly with the information needs of historians and political scientists. Many of the studies are older and don't reflect current research perspectives or changes in technology. Particularly in political science, many of the studies focus on a certain type of source and are not general in scope.

Still the studies tell some interesting things about the patterns of resource use in history and political science. Both disciplines seem to be driven by heavy use of monographs and journals. Most of the journal material is

drawn from a cadre of core journals that act as a channel of communication for scholars of like interest. The great majority of published material used is in the English language. Primary source materials have a special role for the historian, being their essential connection with the past they study.

Both empirical and intuitive works point to the importance of research orientation in decisions about library and resource use. On the intuitive level a suggestion is made that this is source of convergence between the two disciplines. However, the small body of empirical literature hardly provides a comprehensive body of theory to support this contention.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Survey methodology was used to solicit information from historians and political scientists at Kent State University. The survey instrument was based on one used by Lois Buttlar and Lubomyr R. Wynar in their 1992 study of the information needs of ethnic studies scholars.[42] A few modifications were made to reflect differences in the disciplines to be surveyed. This instrument was chosen because of its mixture of closed and open ended questions, and its general applicability to a number of disciplines in the social sciences (see Appendixes).

A total of 110 questionnaires and cover letters were sent out to the departments of history and political science. Of these 57 were sent out to political science and 53 went out to history. Questionnaires were given to faculty members, doctoral candidates, and master's students. The questionnaires were placed in the mailboxes of active faculty and graduate students. The resulting data was entered, tabulated, and analyzed using the EDD and SAS statistical packages at Kent State University.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Of the 110 questionnaires sent out, 44 were returned, for a response rate of 40 percent. From this group of respondents, 21 were returned from the department of history, and 23 were returned from the political science department. For the historians, 53 questionnaires were sent out, and the 21 returns represented a response rate of 40 percent. In political science, 57 questionnaires were sent out and 23 were returned, for a response rate of 41 percent.

Demographic Characteristics

Out of this group of respondents, 41 percent are between the ages of 31-40 (see Table 1). Another group of 32 percent reported belong to the 21-30 age group. A smaller group of 13 percent belong to the 41-50 group, and a still smaller group of 11 percent reported themselves in the age 51-60 group. Only one respondent reported being in the age 61-70 class.

The respondents to the questionnaire are overwhelmingly male (77%). The remaining 23 percent of the total is female.

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents by Demographic Characteristics

Characteristics	N	f	%
Age	44		
21-30		14	31.8
31-41		18	40.9
41-50		6	13.7
51-60		5	11.3
61-70		1	2.3
Over 70		0	0.0
Total			100.0
Gender	44		
Male		34	77.3
Female		10	22.7
Total			100.0
Highest Ed. Degree	44		
Bachelors		13	29.5
Masters		14	31.8
Ph.D.		17	38.7
Other		0	0.0
Total			100.0
Academic Title/Rank	44		
Professor		6	13.7
Asst. Prof.		5	11.3
Assoc. Prof.		6	13.7
Doctoral Student		13	29.5
Masters Student		13	29.5
Other		1	2.3
Total			100.0

A more even distribution was reported to the question on highest educational degree. In this group 39 percent hold the Ph.D degree. Another group of 32 percent reported having a master's degree. Nearly an equal group of 29 percent of the respondents have only a bachelor's degree.

Another even distribution was reported on the question of academic title/rank. For the graduate students, doctoral and master's students are evenly divided at 29 percent each. The remaining 40 percent are divided almost equally for the Ph.Ds. Full and associate professors are highest with 13 percent each, and assistant professors are very close behind at 11 percent.

From the demographic data provided by the participants, some simple general characteristics can be identified. The typical respondent is a male graduate student between the ages of 21-40. A smaller number hold a Ph.D. degree, with a standing of full or associate professor.

Purpose of Research

The participants were asked to report where the results of their research would most likely appear. Their responses were evenly spread out across the various options (see Table 2). An equal number of the respondents state that their work will most likely appear in a journal article (52%), or in the form of a thesis or dissertation (52%). A smaller

Table 2

Distribution of Responses as to Where Research is Likely to Appear

Source (N=44)	f	%
Journal Article	23	52.3
Conference Paper	20	45.5
Thesis/Dissertation	23	52.3
Monograph/Book	16	36.4
Other	0	0.0

portion (45%) indicated that their work could be presented as a paper at a conference. A still smaller portion (36%) reported that their work would likely appear as a book or a monograph.

Areas of Research

Areas of research specialization reported by the respondents are very wide. Some respondents reported various projects going on at once, without identifying any specific one. Others indicated working on a thesis or dissertation to meet specific academic requirements. Of those who indicated research interests, 23 different topics were reported.

The research interests of the historians sampled

reflect a broad selection of political, diplomatic, military, cultural, and social history. Some of the topics reported by the responding historians include family history, the cultural history of the phonograph, U.S. immigration, agrarian populism in the midwest, the Supreme Court and the Civil War, Civil War prisons, Civil War/regimental history, trade in Victorian England, English anti-slavery, Japan's behavior at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, and witchcraft and history in the Russian village 1700-1945.

The political scientists also have a broad selection of areas which reflect state and local government, political theory, policy studies, foreign affairs, and legal studies. The topics of interest include such things as the U.S. Supreme Court and politics, infant mortality and health policy, the city management form of government, decision making, a study of the process of helping conventional supervisors adapt in an employee involvement environment, an examination of radical Basque Nationalist parties, a discursive study of the Persian Gulf War, an article on Justice Kennedy, Ohio elections, the press and the Cold War, the theory of the state, and post World War II U.S. foreign policy and ideology. These topics are numerous and reflect a wide range of methods and cross-disciplinary possibilities. It might be interesting to note here, that

this selection of topics reflects a strong orientation in United States history and politics.

Languages

On the question of languages other than English used to read the scholarly literature, the responses were very uneven. The overwhelming number of respondents (57%) report reading scholarly materials in English only. Of those who reported using other languages, the most frequently read are Spanish (14%), French (12%), and German (12%). Other languages read include Russian, Dutch, Arabic, Chinese, Ukrainian, and Portugese.

Library Use

The respondents were asked to report their weekly use of the library (See Table 3). At the lower end of library use 16 percent use the library 1 hour or less per week and another 16 percent use it 2-4 hours per week. In the realm of moderate use, 30 percent reported going to the library from 5-8 hours. At the higher end of the scale, 30 percent indicated going at least 9-16 hours per week. The number saying they they went more than 16 hours per week was at 9 percent. Only 32 percent of this sample said they were in the library less than 5 hours a week. The remaining 68 percent indicated heavy to moderate use of the library.

Table 3

Distribution of Respondents by Library Use per Week

Hours (N=44)	f	%
1 or less	7	16.0
2-4	7	16.0
5-8	13	29.5
9-16	13	29.5
more than 16	4	9.0
Total		100.0

Sources Typically Used

In the area of information sources the respondents were given a chance to indicate the types of resources typically used in their research. This question also provided an opportunity to split the sample, and see some patterns of resource use between the two disciplines.

In viewing the respondents as a whole, it can be observed (See Tables 4 and 5) that all respondents rely heavily on monographs and books (93%). Supporting their use of books, is an almost universal reliance on the online catalog (91%). Newspapers are also typically used research tools (77%). Computerized searching, through the use of CD-ROMs, is heavily employed by this group of respondents

Table 4

Information Sources Typically Used in Research by Historians and Political Scientists

Information Source (N=44)	f	%
Online (or card) catalog	40	91.0
Dissertations	21	47.8
CD-ROM databases	31	70.5
Fed. archives/spec. coll.	15	34.1
State archives/spec. coll.	11	25.0
University archives	3	6.9
Institutional records	14	31.9
Private Papers	16	36.4
Photographs/illustrations	4	9.0
Unpublished survey data	5	11.4
Professional colleagues	25	56.9
Personally collected data	14	31.9
Journal articles	25	56.9
Monographs/books	41	93.2
Newspapers	34	77.3
Online databases	24	55.0
Government documents	29	66.0
Pamphlets	9	20.5
Maps	4	9.0.
Field data	9	20.5
Sound recordings	1	2.0
Films and videos	2	4.6
Radio and television	4	9.0
Conferences	10	22.7
Personal collection	5	11.4
Scholars in other disciplines	6	13.6
Microfilm collection	27	61.0

(70%). The use of government document sources is also perceived as important (66%).

The historians looked at in this survey reported findings similar to the group of respondents as a whole (see Tables 6 and 7). The five sources used

Table 5

Five Sources Most Frequently Used in Research by Historians and Political Scientists

Information Source (N=44)	f	%
Monographs/books	41	93.2
Online (or card) catalog	40	91.0
Newspapers	34	77.5
CD-ROM databases	31	70.5
Government documents	29	66.0

most in research by this group of historians was led by monographs/books (95%), the online catalogue (91%), and newspaper sources (81%). Microfilm sources (67%) and private papers (62%) were used frequently in the research of the historians sampled. The heavy use of microfilm collections may be used in support of an overall heavy use of archival sources such as federal archives (57%), institutional records (52%), and state archives (39%).

Among the surveyed political scientists, the five most frequently used sources (see Tables 8 and 9) reflect some interesting patterns. Like the group of all respondents, the political scientists reported heavy use of monographs/ books (95%), and supplementing their use of monographs is a strong reliance on the online catalog (91%). The political

Table 6

Information Sources Typically Used in Research by Historians

Information Source (N=21)	f	%
Online (or card) catalog	19	91.0
Dissertations	11	52.4
CD-ROM databases	11	52.4
Fed. archives/spec. coll.	12	57.2
State archives/spec. coll.	8	38.1
University archives	2	10.0
Institutional records	11	52.4
Private Papers	13	62.0
Photographs/illustrations	3	14.7
Unpublished survey data	0	0.0
Professional colleagues	10	47.7
Personally collected data	5	23.8
Journal articles	9	43.0
Monographs/books	20	95.4
Newspapers	17	81.0
Online databases	8	38.1
Government documents	9	43.0
Pamphlets	3	14.7
Maps	3	14.7
Field data	0	0.0
Sound recordings	1	4.8
Films and videos	0	0.0
Radio and television	2	10.0
Conferences	4	19.0
Personal collection	4	19.0
Scholars in other disciplines	2	10.0
Microfilm collection	14	67.0

scientists also reported a heavy integration of government documents into their research. Computerized reference tools figure prominently in this sample of political scientists. CD-ROM databases (82%) and online databases (70%) are heavily used instruments in the research of this group of

Table 7

Five Sources Most Frequently Used in Research by Historians

Information Source (N=21)	f	%
Monographs/books	20	95.4
Online (or card) catalog	19	91.5
Newspapers	17	81.0
CD-ROM databases	14	67.0
Government documents	13	62.0

scholars. Perhaps the heavy use of CD-ROM and online information sources is needed to support the heavy utilization of government documents (87%) and journal articles (65%).

When asked to identify the sources typically used to identify useful information (see Tables 10 and 11), the respondents as a whole reported citations in other publications (95%) as the most frequently used source. The remaining most used sources include subject searching in the library catalog, (88%), bibliographies (81%), library catalogs (75%), and search library catalog by author/title (68%).

The methods of identifying useful information for the historians sampled again reflect similar patterns to the

Table 8

Information Sources Typically Used in Research by Political Scientists

Information Source (N=23)	f	%
Online (or card) catalog	21	91.3
Dissertations	10	43.4
CD-ROM databases	19	82.4
Fed. archives/spec. coll.	3	13.0
State archives/spec. coll.	3	13.0
University archives	1	4.3
Institutional records	3	13.0
Private Papers	3	13.0
Photographs/illustrations	1	4.3
Unpublished survey data	5	21.8
Professional colleagues	15	65.3
Personally collected data	9	39.2
Journal articles	15	65.3
Monographs/books	22	95.0
Newspapers	15	65.3
Online databases	16	70.0
Government documents	20	87.0
Pamphlets	6	26.0
Maps	1	4.3
Field data	9	39.2
Sound recordings	0	0.0
Films and videos	2	8.7
Radio and television	2	8.7
Conferences	6	26.0
Personal collection	1	4.3
Scholars in other disciplines	4	17.0
Microfilm collection	13	56.5

group as a whole. The five most used sources (see Tables 12 and 13) include such things as citations in other publications (95%), bibliographies (91%), subject searching in the library catalog (81%), browse shelves in subject area (76%), and library catalogs (71%). Perhaps many of these

Table 9

Five Sources Most Frequently Used in Research by Political Scientists

Information Source (N=23)	f	%
Monographs/books	22	95.0
Online (or card) catalog	21	91.3
Government documents	20	87.0
CD-ROM databases	19	82.4
Online databases	16	70.0

sources reflect the mixture of formal and informal research methods employed by this group of historians.

For the political scientists, the sources (see Tables 14 and 15) reflect many of the mixed patterns employed by the historians. The five most used sources include citations in other publications (95%), subject searching in the library catalog (91%), CD-ROM databases (87%), discussions with colleagues (82%), and the library catalogs (78%). Perhaps most interestingly is the importance that this group of political scientists regard information received from their own professional colleagues.

The respondents were given a chance to indicate the various library formats they found the most or least convenient. For the responding historians, books (38%) and

Table 10

Sources Typically Used to Identify Useful Information by Historians and Political Scientists

Source (N=44)	f	%
Abstracts and Indexes (print form)	28	63.7
Abstracts and Indexes (online)	22	50.0
Abstracts and Indexes (CD-ROM)	27	61.4
Consult expert or authority	26	59.1
Discussion with colleagues	28	63.7
Library catalogs	33	75.0
Consult librarian	9	20.4
Bibliographies	36	81.8
Book Reviews	24	54.6
Browse shelves in subject area	28	63.7
Search library catalogs by author/title	30	68.2
Search library catalog by subject	39	88.7
Citations in other publications	42	95.4
Guides to institutional holdings	16	36.4
Book review sources	11	25.0

the online catalog (38%) are the most convenient (see Table 16). Print indexes (28%), CD-ROMs (23%), online sources (19%), and journals (18%) are convenient to use by a substantial number of respondents. Other sources found

Table 11

Five Sources Most Frequently Used to Identify Information by Historians and Political Scientists

Source (N=44)	f	%
Citations in other publications	42	95.4
Search library catalog by subject	39	88.7
Bibliographies	36	81.8
Library catalogs	33	75.0
Search library catalog by author/title	30	68.2

convenient are microfilm, newspapers, experts, internet, and bibliographies.

As might be expected, the format found the least convenient by historians is microfilm (47%). Fewer historians (see Table 17) identified sources such as print indexes (19%), fiche (19%), and archival sources (19%) as hindering their research. Others find things such as newspapers (14%), CD-ROMs (14%), OCLC (14%), and computers (14%) as problems in research. Other formats difficult to use are online databases, browsing, librarians, and the online catalog.

Among the sampled politcal scientists, computerized formats are found very useful and convenient (see Table 18). CD-ROMs (56%) and online (39%) formats are preferred by a

Table 12

Sources Typically Used to Identify Useful Information by Historians

Source (N=21)	f	%
Abstracts and Indexes (print form)	12	57.2
Abstracts and Indexes (online)	7	33.3
Abstracts and Indexes (CD-ROM)	7	33.3
Consult expert or authority	14	66.7
Discussion with colleagues	9	43.0
Library catalogs	15	71.5
Consult librarian	3	14.7
Bibliographies	19	91.0
Book reviews	12	57.2
Browse shelves in subject area	16	76.2
Search library catalog by author/title	14	66.7
Search library catalog by subject	17	81.0
Citations in other publications	20	95.4
Guides to institutional archival holdings	12	57.2
Book review sources	5	23.8

large number of the political scientists surveyed. As in the case of historians, books (30%) and the online catalog (30%) are also popular formats. Print indexes (17%), and journals (13%) are found convenient by a lesser number of

Table 13

Five Sources Most Frequently Used to Identify Useful Information by Historians

Source (N=21)	f	%
Citations in other publications	20	95.4
Bibliographies	19	91.0
Search Library catalog by subject	17	81.0
Browse shelves in subject area	16	76.2
Library catalogs	15	71.5

the political science scholars. Some other convenient means mentioned were librarians, book reviews, bibliographies, newspapers, personal interview, microfilm, and E-mail.

Like their counterparts in history, the political science respondents (see Table 19) identified microfilm (35%) as the least convenient format. Confirming their preference for computerized sources, print indexes (30%) are considered inconvenient by a large number of the political scientists responding. Much smaller numbers reported use of experts (13%) as inconvenient. The responding political scientists also reported as inconvenient librarians, card catalogs, online catalogs, browsing, data files, government documents, survey data, newspaper indexes, book reviews, microfiche, online databases, and guides to government sources.

Table 14

Sources Most Frequently Used to Identify Useful Information by Political Scientists

Source (N=23)	f	%
Abstracts and Indexes (printform)	16	70.0
Abstracts and Indexes (online)	15	65.3
Abstracts and Indexes (CD-ROM)	20	87.0
Consult expert or authority	12	52.2
Discussed with colleagues	19	82.4
Library catalogs	18	78.3
Consult librarian	6	26.0
Bibliographies	17	73.9
Book reviews	12	52.2
Browse shelves in subject area	12	52.2
Search library catalog by author/title	16	70.0
Search library catalog by subject	21	91.3
Citations in other publications	22	95.0
Guides to institutional archival holdings	4	17.0
Book review sources	6	26.0

When asked to indicate the abstracting and indexing services they used most frequently, the respondents reported a wide variety of different sources. In both disciplines core disciplinary services dominate the choices of the

Table 15

Five Sources Most Frequently Used to Identify Useful Information by Political Scientists

Source (N=23)	f	%
Citations in other publications	22	95.0
Search Library catalog by subject	21	91.3
Abstract Indexes (CD-ROM)	20	87.0
Discussion with colleagues	19	82.4
Library catalogs	18	78.3

respondents. In the case of the historians, America: History and Life (38%) is the most frequently used. Historical Abstracts (24%) and Social Science Index (24%) are also heavily used. Other abstracting and indexing services reported by this group of historians are Social Science Citation Index, Humanities Index, Book Review Index, Dissertation Abstracts, and Readers Guide.

In general, the political scientists use a wider selection of abstracting and indexing services. The Public Affairs Information Service (43%) and the Social Science Index (43%) are the most popular selections. ABC Political Science (30%) and International Political Science Abstracts (30%) are also used considerably by the responding political scientists. Outside of these widely used sources, other

Table 16

Formats Found the Most Convenient by Historians

Format (N=21)	f	%
Books	8	38.1
Online catalog	8	38.1
Abstracts & Indexes (printform)	6	28.6
CD-ROMs	5	23.8
Online sources	4	19.0
Journals	4	19.0
Microfilm	1	4.8
Newspapers	1	4.8
Experts	1	4.8
Internet	1	4.8
Bibliographies	1	4.8

services reported include Psychological Abstracts, ERIC, Monthly Catalog, Index to Legal Periodicals, New York Times Index, Sociological Abstracts, and Readers Guide.

The respondents were asked to list the journal titles that they read regularly. Close to 50 journals are read by the respondents. Like the abstracting and indexing services, the two disciplines each have a number of core journals that dominate the listings.

Table 17

Formats Found the Least Convenient by Historians

Format (N=21)	f	%
Microfilm	10	47.4
Abstracts and Indexes (printform)	4	19.0
Fiche	4	19.0
Archival	4	19.0
Newspapers	3	14.7
CD-ROM	3	14.7
OCLC	3	14.7
Computers	3	14.7
Online databases	1	4.8
Browse	1	4.8
Librarian	1	4.8
Online catalog	1	4.8

Among the historians the Journal of American History (47%) is the most widely read journal, followed by the American Historical Review (28%). Lesser numbers report using the Journal of Southern History (19%) and Civil War History (19%). Other journals included are Historical Journal, Journal of Negro History, Revue Historique, Journal of European Studies, Journal of Modern History, Economic

Table 18

Formats Found the Most Convenient by Political Scientists

Format (N=23)	f	%
CD-ROM	13	56.5
Online databases	9	39.2
Online catalog	7	30.5
Books	7	30.5
Abstracts and indexes (printform)	4	17.0
Journals	3	13.0
Librarian	1	4.3
Book Reviews	1	4.3
Bibliographies	1	4.3
Newspapers	1	4.3
Personal interview	1	4.3
Microfilm	1	4.3
E-Mail	1	4.3

History Review, Journal of Social History. Journal of Popular Culture, Ohio History, History Today, Diplomatic History, English Historical Review, Slavic Review, ALBION, and the Russian Review. Both the widely used titles and the other selections reflect the strong American orientation of this group of historians.

Table 19

Formats Found the Least Convenient by Political Scientists

Format (N=23)	f	%
Microfilm	8	34.8
Abstracts and Indexes (printform)	7	30.5
Experts	3	13.0
Archives	3	13.0
Librarian	2	8.7
Card catalogs	2	8.7
Online catalogs	2	8.7
Browse	1	4.3
Data files	1	4.3
Government Documents	1	4.3
Survey data	1	4.3
Newspaper indexes	1	4.3
Book reviews	1	4.3
Microfiche	1	4.3
Online databases	1	4.3
Guides to government sources	1	4.3

The selection of journals among the political scientists is also wide. The dominating title is American Political Science Review (65%), followed by Comparative Politics (26%), and the Journal of Politics (17%). Outside

this group of core titles other journals read include International Studies Quarterly, International Organization, Political Psychology, ORBIS, Asian Survey, World Politics Studies, Journal of Conflict Resolution, Journal of Palestine Studies, Journal of Inter-American Affairs, Journal of Middle East Studies, International Political Science Review, Journal of Peace Research, Journal of Political Studies, British Journal of Political Science, American Sociological Review, Politics and Society Review, Journal of Employee Ownership, Latin American Review, and Operant Subjectivity. Like their counterparts in history, this selection of journals reflects a strong American orientation.

This group of scholars was asked to indicate the percentage of research materials borrowed from other libraries (see Table 20). Nearly 14 percent of the respondents reported no interlibrary borrowing. Over 27 percent of the scholars reported borrowing in the 1-10 percent range. Another 16 percent indicated they borrow in the 11-25 percent range. Still another 27 percent said they are in the 25-50 percent group. Only 7 percent put themselves in the 51-75 percent catagory of borrowers. Finally 9 percent of the respondents reported borrowing 76-100 percent of their materials from other libraries. Taken as a whole, 70 percent of the respondents seem to be light

Table 20

Percentage of Current Research Materials Borrowed from other Libraries

Percentage (N=44)	f	%
None	6	13.6
1-10%	12	27.3
11-25%	7	16.0
26-50%	12	27.3
51-75%	3	6.8
76-100%	4	9.0
Total		100.0

to moderate borrowers of materials from other libraries.

In terms of the actual libraries and institutions used in research, this group of scholars has a wide selection of choices. The historians reported that the library at KSU is most widely used (47%) followed by the Library of Congress and the National Archives (24%). Other groups reported using the University of Akron (19%), the University of Illinois (14%), University of Chicago (14%), and Bowling Green University (14%). Other libraries used are Ohio State, New York Public, Case Western Reserve University, Western Reserve Historical Society, Center for NATO Studies

Library, Institute for Jazz Studies, Cleveland Public Library, University of Georgia, Ohio University, Wright State, University of Pittsburgh, Hebrew Union college, University of Michigan, Ohio Historical Society, University of Helsinki Library, Russian Archives, Lenin Library, and Lancaster University (England).

The political science respondents also reported a large number of libraries identified as important. They report a strong regional orientation in their top libraries used. The KSU library is the most widely used (39%), followed by University of Akron (26%), Cleveland Public Library (13%), and Case Western Reserve University(13%). Other libraries used are Ohio State, Library of Congress, University of Chicago, Cleveland State University Library, University of Pittsburgh, Akron Public Library, Bowling Green University, Oberlin College, the National Archives, the Kennedy Presidential Library, and the Basque Studies Program at the University of Nevada, Reno.

The respondents were finally asked to report how they kept up with current research in their fields. Few of the respondents answered the question in any detail. Among the historians (see Table 21) journals are used most frequently to keep up (62%). Books (24%) and book reviews (24%) are also used in keeping up to date. Even smaller numbers indicated using conferences (14%) and colleagues (14%) to

Table 21

Sources Used by Historians to Keep Up

Source (N=21)	f	%
Journals	13	62.0
Books	5	23.8
Book reviews	5	23.8
Conferences	3	14.7
Colleagues	3	14.7

keep current.

For the political scientists (see Table 22) more people reported on how they tried to keep current (perhaps reflecting the greater importance of currency in political science). They also reported that journals (70%) are used the most widely in keeping abreast. These are followed by proressional colleagues (22%), conferences (22%), publishers advance notices (17%) and experts (17%). Other sources mentioned include E-mail conferences, bibliographies, and government documents.

Table 22

Sources Used by Political Scientists to Keep Up

Source (N=23)	f	%
Journals	16	70.0
Colleagues	5	21.6
Conferences	5	21.6
Publishers advance notices	4	17.0
Experts	4	17.0
E-mail conferences	2	8.7
Bibliographies	1	4.3
Government documents	1	4.3

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This analysis of the information needs of the historians and political scientists of Kent State University reveals that the survey respondents are a male dominated group of graduate students evenly divided between master's and doctoral students. A smaller number of respondents reported holding the Ph.D. degree. They are most likely to see their research appear in a journal article, or in a thesis or dissertation. Their research interests are varied, with a strong focus on United States history and politics. The great majority of the respondents indicated doing all of their research in English only. The lack of regular use of foreign languages is supported by nearly every empirical study on the information needs of these two disciplines.

In the area of information sources, both historians and political scientists report relying very heavily on monograph sources, with both groups at 95 percent. Supporting the heavy use of monographs is an almost universal use of the library catalog, with both groups reporting a 91 percent use. Heavy research use is also made of newspapers. Of the reporting historians, 81 percent indicated use of

newspapers, while 74 percent of the responding political scientists use newspapers in their research.

As might be expected, the sampled historians make much greater use of archival sources. Over 60 percent stated that they make use of private papers and heavy use of microfilm collections which may support heavy use of other archival sources. Indeed, close to 60 percent of the reporting historians use the federal archives, 39 percent use state archives, and another 58 percent said they use institutional records. This is contrasted to the 12 percent of political scientists that use the federal and state archives.

The responding political scientists appear more journal orientated than their counterparts in history. Journals are used by 70 percent of the political scientists, and by only 43 percent of the historians. Perhaps some of the reason for these numbers is the guiding importance of primary source material for the historian.

Another interesting point of comparison is in the area of government documents. The respondents in political science are very heavy users of government documents. In this sample, 87 percent of the political scientists reported using government documents for research. This is in comparison to only 43 percent in history. These numbers reflect very heavy patterns of government document use by

the discipline as a whole. This pattern is strongly suggested by earlier studies, mainly those of Robert Goehlert in 1980[43] and that of Christopher Nolan in 1986.[44]

Perhaps the most interesting area of difference is in the use of computerized reference sources. CD-ROM and online databases have impacted political science in a much greater way. Over 82 percent of the responding political scientists reported using CD-ROM databases, and another 70 percent said they use online databases. This is compared to 52 percent of the historians who use CD-ROM sources, and the 38 percent who said they use online databases. The heavy use of computerized information by political scientists may be used to support their heavy reliance on government documents and journals. Many of the fast updating features of computer databases may also point to the greater importance of currency in political science research.

Despite the fewer numbers of historians using computer sources, CD-ROMs and online databases have impacted historians. The numbers in this study point to large numbers of historians doing database searching. Margaret Stieg, in her 1981 survey, reported practically no use of automated sources. She indicates that: "The lack of use of newer forms of media by historians is striking, if not surprising."[45] In the additional comments section of this study, many historians made observations about computer

databases. They reported a willingness to use them even more if they corrected some of the problems of their current set-up. Some of the problems which limit use are "information that does not go back far enough," "lack of databases which deal directly with history," and "difficulty of use."

In terms of identifying information, historians found things like citations in other publications and bibliographies as effectively directing them to a mainly book centered research process. The political scientists also found citations in other publications equally important. They also indicated very heavy use of CD-ROM databases, most likely being used to search for journal information. It should be noted here, that both groups of scholars rarely use librarians as a means of identifying information.

Among the responding historians, traditional print formats like books and print indexes were found to be the most convenient while a format like microfilm is generally found inconvenient. The political scientists prefer to use more automated formats. CD-ROMs and online sources are the most convenient formats, while microfilm and print indexes (30%) create problems.

In terms of abstracts and indexes used and journals read, both groups of scholars rely on a core group of

publications. Not more than three publications are employed by a very large majority of the respondents. All of the cadre publications are specific to the discipline in question. The use of core literature is very strongly demonstrated in earlier studies, mainly those of June Stewart in 1970[46] and the Bath study of social scientists.[47]

This group of respondents are light to moderate borrowers of resources from other libraries. The selection of libraries used in research is varied. The responding historians seem to use institutions that have more of an archival emphasis, like the Library of Congress and the National Archives. A more regional approach to resource use was reported by the political scientists who use libraries such as Akron University, Cleveland Public, and Case Western Reserve University.

Both historians and political scientists use journals to keep up with research in their fields. Historians are also likely to use books and book reviews to keep current. The political scientists are likely to supplement their use of journals with conferences and discussions with colleagues.

This study shows patterns of both convergence and divergence in the kinds of resource use between the two disciplines. Despite heavy use of many of the same tools (e.g. monographs/books), differences in access and method

remain. Historians tend to be more print orientated, and rely on more traditional access tools (print indexes, published bibliographies, and archival guides). The political science scholars use many of the same tools, but access them using such tools as CD-ROMs and online databases. Overall, the findings of this study strongly support earlier studies in the social sciences, and information studies of historians and political scientists.

Librarians must make themselves aware of the special needs of historians and political scientists. Knowing that both groups heavily use monographs, librarians must make an effort to maintain strong core collections for both disciplines. They must have a classification system, and a catalog that can access the collection in a number of ways. Computer and online services must be diverse and accessible to users. In the case of historians, database producers must make efforts to cover more retrospective material. More history CD-ROM and online databases need to be made available, and their use simplified. Librarians should consider holding workshops and seminars that encourage the chance for a research partnership between librarians and scholars.

Kent State University

School of Library and Information Science
(216) 672-2782
Fax (216) 672-7965

P.O. Box 5190, Kent, Ohio 44242-0001

Re: Information seeking behavior of historians

April 2, 1993

Dear Researcher in History:

I am a graduate student in the School of Library and Information Science at Kent State University. As part of the research requirement for my master's degree, I am doing a study about the information needs of graduate students and faculty members in history. The following questionnaire elicits information that may help me discover the major sources of information used by historians to conduct research. This information would be useful to both theorists and practitioners in the field of librarianship.

Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed as you do not need to sign your name to individual questionnaires; only the investigator has access to the survey data. There is no penalty of any kind if you should choose to not participate in this study, or if you would withdraw from participation at anytime. While your cooperation is essential to the success of this study, it is, of course, voluntary. A copy of the results of the study will be available upon request.

If you have any further questions, please contact me at (216) 672-2782 or Dr. Lois Buttlar, my research advisor, at (216) 672-2782. If you have any further questions regarding research at Kent State University you may contact Dr. Eugene Wenninger, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, at (216) 672-2070.

Thank you very much for your anticipated cooperation; it is greatly appreciated. You may return the questionnaire in the survey box located in the history office.

Sincerely,

Joseph E. Straw
Graduate Student

1. Age of Researcher

____	21-30	____	31-40	____	41-50
____	51-60	____	61-70	____	over 70

2. Sex of Researcher ____ Male ____ Female

3. Highest educational degree obtained

____	Bachelor's	____	Master's	____	PhD.
____	Other (please indicate)	____			

4. Indicate Academic title/rank

____	Instructor	____	Asst. Prof.
____	Assoc. Prof.	____	Professor
____	Master's student	____	Doctoral student
____	Other (please indicate)	____	

5. Where are the results of your research likely to appear?

____	journal article	____	thesis/dissertation
____	conference paper	____	monograph/book
____	other (please indicate)	____	

6. What has been the most recent research project in which you have been engaged?

_____

7. In what languages other than English, do you regularly read the scholarly literature?

_____ _____ _____ _____

8. Indicate the number of hours per week you use the library/archives?

____	1 or less	____	2-4	____	5-8
____	9-16	____	more		

9. Check all of the following information sources that you typically use in your research:

____	On line (or card catalogue	____	Monographs/books
____	Dissertations	____	Newspapers
____	CD-ROM databases	____	On line databases
____	Federal archives/spec. coll.	____	Government documents
____	State archives/spec. coll.	____	Pamphlets
____	University archives	____	Maps
____	Institutional records	____	Field data
____	Private papers	____	Sound recordings
____	Photographs/illustrations	____	Films and videos
____	Unpublished survey data	____	Radio and television
____	Professional colleagues	____	Conferences
____	Personally collected data	____	Personal collection
____	Other (explain)_____	____	Scholars in other disciplines
		____	Microfilm collection

_____

_____

10. Please rank the sources you use the most or consider the most important (use the list above or any others).

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____

11. How do you typically identify useful information? (Check all that apply).

_____ Abstracts and Indexes (print form)
_____ Abstracts and Indexes (on line)
_____ Abstracts and Indexes (CD-Rom)
_____ Consult expert or authority
_____ Discussion with colleagues
_____ Library catalogs
_____ Consult librarian
_____ Bibliographies
_____ Book reviews
_____ Browse shelves in subject area
_____ Search library catalog by author/title
_____ Search library catalog by subject
_____ Citations in other publications
_____ Guides to institutional archival holdings
_____ Book review sources

12. Please rank the five most important sources of identifying information (use list above or any other).

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____

13. When you use different sources in your research which three formats do you find the most convenient?

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____

14. When you use different sources in your research which three formats do you find the least convenient?

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____

15. What indexing and abstracting sources do you use the most frequently?

_____
_____
_____

16. What journal titles do you read the most frequently?

_____
_____
_____

17. What percentage of materials, used in your current research, have been borrowed from other libraries?

68

____	none	____	1-10%	____	11-25%
____	26-50%	____	51-75%	____	76-100%

18. List the five libraries or respositories that are the most important to your research.

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____

19. How do you keep informed of what is being currently published or research in progress in your field?

_____

_____

Comments: Feel free to add any additional comments or observations you may have regarding the information needs of your field. Use the back of this sheet for your comments.

Additional Comments:

Kent State University

School of Library and Information Science
(216) 672-2782
Fax (216) 672-7965

P.O. Box 5190, Kent, Ohio 44242-0001

Re: Information seeking behavior of Political Scientists

April 4, 1993

Dear Researcher in Political Science:

I am a graduate student in the School of Library and Information Science at Kent State University. As part of the research requirement for my master's degree, I am doing a study about the information needs of graduate students and faculty members in political science. The following questionnaire elicits information that may help me discover the major sources of information used by political scientists to conduct research. This information would be useful to both theorists and practitioners in the field of librarianship.

Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed as you do not need to sign your name to individual questionnaires; only the investigator has access to the survey data. There is no penalty of any kind if you should choose to not participate in this study, or if you would withdraw from participation at anytime. While your cooperation is essential to the success of this study, it is, of course, voluntary. A copy of the results of the study will be available upon request.

If you have any further questions, please contact me at (216) 672-2782 or Dr. Lois Buttlar, my research advisor, at (216) 672-2782. If you should have any further questions about research at Kent State University you may contact Dr. Eugene Wenninger, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, at (216) 672-2070.

Thank you very much for your anticipated cooperation; it is greatly appreciated. You may return the questionnaire in the survey box located in the political science office.

Sincerely,

Joseph E. Straw
Graduate Student

1. Age of Researcher

_____	21-30	_____	31-40	_____	41-50
_____	51-60	_____	61-70	_____	over 70

2. Sex of Researcher _____ Male _____ Female

3. Highest educational degree obtained

_____	Bachelor's	_____	Master's	_____	PhD.
_____	Other (please indicate)	_____			

4. Indicate Academic title/rank

_____	Instructor	_____	Asst. Prof.
_____	Assoc. Prof.	_____	Professor
_____	Master's student	_____	Doctoral student
_____	Other (please indicate)	_____	

5. Where are the results of your research likely to appear?

_____	journal article	_____	thesis/dissertation
_____	conference paper	_____	monograph/book
_____	other (please indicate)	_____	

6. What has been the most recent research project in which you have been engaged?

_____

7. In what languages other than English, do you regularly read the scholarly literature?

_____ _____ _____ _____

8. Indicate the number of hours per week you use the library/archives?

_____	1 or less	_____	2-4	_____	5-8
_____	9-16	_____	more		

9. Check all of the following information sources that you typically use in your research:

_____	On line (or card catalogue	_____	Monographs/books
_____	Dissertations	_____	Newspapers
_____	CD-ROM databases	_____	On line databases
_____	Federal archives/spec. coll.	_____	Government documents
_____	State archives/spec. coll.	_____	Pamphlets
_____	University archives	_____	Maps
_____	Institutional records	_____	Field data
_____	Private papers	_____	Sound recordings
_____	Photographs/illustrations	_____	Films and videos
_____	Unpublished survey data	_____	Radio and television
_____	Professional colleagues	_____	Conferences
_____	Personally collected data	_____	Personal collection
_____	Other (explain)_____	_____	Scholars in other disciplines
		_____	Microfilm collection

_____

_____

10. Please rank the sources you use the most or consider the most important (use the list above or any others).

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____

11. How do you typically identify useful information? (Check all that apply).

_____ Abstracts and Indexes (print form)
_____ Abstracts and Indexes (on line)
_____ Abstracts and Indexes (CD-Rom)
_____ Consult expert or authority
_____ Discussion with colleagues
_____ Library catalogs
_____ Consult librarian
_____ Bibliographies
_____ Book reviews
_____ Browse shelves in subject area
_____ Search library catalog by author/title
_____ Search library catalog by subject
_____ Citations in other publications
_____ Guides to institutional archival holdings
_____ Book review sources

12. Please rank the five most important sources of identifying information (use list above or any other).

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____

13. When you use different sources in your research which three formats do you find the most convenient?

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____

14. When you use different sources in your research which three formats do you find the least convenient?

1. _____ 2. _____
3 _____

15. What indexing and abstracting sources do you use the most frequently?

_____
_____
_____

16. What journal titles do you read the most frequently?

_____
_____
_____

17. What percentage of materials, used in your current research, have been borrowed from other libraries?

____ none	____ 1-10%	____ 11-25%
____ 26-50%	____ 51-75%	____ 76-100%

18. List the five libraries or respositories that are the most important to your research.

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5 _____

19. How do you keep informed of what is being currently published or research in progress in your field?

_____

_____

Comments: Feel free to add any additional comments or observations you may have regarding the information needs of your field. Use the back of this sheet for your comments.

Additional Comments:

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